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A

SERMON

Preached before the

King & Queen

AT

WHITEHALL, *Decemb. 8th.* 1689.

By *Edward Pelling* D. D. Chaplain to his Grace the Duke of *Somerset.*

By Her Majesties Special Command.

LONDON,

Printed for *Walter Kettilby* at the Bishops-Head in St. *Paul's* Church-yard. 1690.

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St. Luke 1. 71.

That we ſhould be ſaved from our Enemies, and from the hands of all that hate us.

THeſe Words of *Zacharias* do evidently relate to our Bleſſed Saviours Incarnation: in Memory whereof, the Zeal and Wiſdom of the Catholick Church hath ſet apart this time of the Year, that all Profeſſors of Chriſtianity may, now eſpecially, offer up to God their moſt ſolemn Thankſgivings, for that ineſtimable Bleſſing to the whole World. It would be beneath the Piety of the Chriſtian Religion, ſhould we paſs over the Memorial of his wonderful Nativity, without the moſt publick Expreſſions of Devotion which the moſt ſenſible Hearts can poſſibly give; ſince he was once uſherd into the World, not only with the Mira-

culous Birth of *John* the Baptiſt, to prepare his way as his Herald and Fore-runner, but alſo by a Majeſtick Train of glorious Angels, and by the whole goodly Fellowſhip of the Prophets, which have ſpoken ſince Propheſy firſt began.

It was that which *Zacharias* now, nay, which our Saviour himſelf afterwards, and his Apoſtles after him, took notice of eſpecially; that *in the Scriptures of Moſes and all the Prophets, there were things written which did plainly concern Him*; that *thoſe things which God before had ſhewed by the mouth of all his Prophets, he fulfilled in Him*; and that *to him give all the Prophets witneſs.* For this was a convincing Argument of his own Divine Authority, and of the unqueſtionable Truth of his Religion, that every thing was accompliſht in Him, whatſoever was before ſpoken of the Meſſiah, by thoſe extraordinary Men whom God had raiſed up by his own immediate Power in all Ages, to foretel things to come: When we read in the Old Teſtament ſuch and

and ſuch things, Recorded of the time of the Meſſiahs coming, of his Birth, Parentage, Perſon, Condition of Life, Doctrine, Miracles, Sufferings, Death, Reſurrection, Aſcenſion; and of the ſtrange and ſudden Propagation of his Religion that was to be among Jews and Gentiles; and when we find in the New Teſtament how accurately all was fulfilled in the Bleſſed Jeſus, and in him alone: So that the Hiſtory of our Saviour is a very plain Counterpart of the Prophets Predictions; we have the higheſt reaſon in the World to believe, that This was *He who was to come, and that we are not to look for another.*

But of all theſe Predictions, *Zacharias* here ſingleth out one, which is to be the Subject of our preſent Meditations, *viz.* That Promiſe made to *Abraham*, Gen. 22. whereof this was a part, *That his Seed ſhould poſſeſs the gate of his Enemies*, v. 17. He ſaith not *thy Seeds*, as if he ſpake of many, but *as of One, thy Seed, which is Chriſt*, ſaith St. *Paul*, Gal. 3. 6. And ſo the Senſe of the Predicti-

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on is this, that God would in his due time moſt certainly raiſe up an Eminent Perſon, the *Meſſiah*, of the numerous Poſterity of *Abrahm*, that ſhould not only bleſs his People, by turning them away from their Iniquities, but ſhould moreover protect and defend them, by exerciſing his Victorious Power, even over the ſtrongeſt of their Enemies. And this is the very Senſe of *Zacharias* here, though he expreſt himſelf in ſomewhat a different Form of Words, ſpeaking now of the *Meſſiah*, that was yet in the Holy Virgins Womb: *God hath raiſed up an Horn of Salvation for us, in the houſe of his Servant David; as he ſpake by the mouth of his holy Prophets, which have been ſince the World began: that we ſhould be ſaved from our Enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us.*

In diſcourſing upon which Words, it will be neceſſary for me to ſhew,

1. What thoſe Enemies are, from whoſe Hand we were to be delivered by the *Meſſiah*.

2. How

2. How the Prediction touching this Deliverance is fulfilled in the Bleſſed Jeſus; or how his Providence is ſhewed in ſaving us from our Enemies.

3. And ſo in the laſt place, to draw down this Conſideration to our Chriſtian Practice.

1. What thoſe Enemies are, from whoſe hand we were to be delivered by the Meſſiah; ſome underſtand it only of our *Spiritual* Enemies, as of Sin, which without the Grace of Chriſt, muſt have Reigned in our mortal Bodies; of Death, which without his Victory over the Grave, muſt have holden us to all Eternity; and of *the Devil*, who without the Power of Chriſt, would have Captivated us by his Wiles, and brought us into his Condemnation. Which is the Reaſon the Author to the *Hebrews* gives of our Saviours partaking of Fleſh and Blood, *That through death he might deſtroy him who had the power of death, that is the Devil*, Heb. 2. 14.

And indeed these Deliverances are of the greatest consequence by far, and so the fittest for the Messiah to accomplish, because they immediately concern our Immortal Souls, and are in order to the endless *happiness* of our Souls in another World. But yet, by the Salvation spoken of in the Text, must be meant also Deliverance from our *Temporal* Enemies, or from such as visibly and forcibly oppose the Kingdom of the Messiah, and the Truth of his Religion.

1. For, first, *Zacharias* now spoke like a Jew, as one that might expect, as the rest of the Jews, nay as the Apostles themselves for some time did, a Glorious Temporal Deliverer, that should set up his Throne upon the Earth, and go in and out before them after a Pompous manner, as *David* and other of their Kings had done. Though as to this particular Circumstance they were mistaken, because *the Kingdom of Christ was not of this World*; yet those Predictions on which these their Expectations

ons were grounded, do plainly argue, that the Meſſiah was not wholly to ſhut himſelf out of the World, but that how Inglorious ſoever his ſuffering State might be, yet being once exalted to the Right hand of God, he was to be enſtated King of Kings, and all Power in Heaven and in Earth was to be given unto him. Hence it follows, that his Office was to be, not only to make all due Proviſion for our Souls, but moreover to take care even of the outward State of his Church; by Exerciſing his Soveraignty over all; by watching all Affairs here below; by directing all Occurrences to the Intereſt of his Kingdom; by ſubduing his and his Churches Enemies; and by Defending his Faithful Servants; ſo far at leaſt as it ſerves for their Good and for his own Glory; becauſe the power of Defending is a very neceſſary part of his Soveraign Authority.

2. For, Secondly, were it not thus, what fair Conſtruction can we make of a great many Propheſies relating to the Meſſiah? that all his Enemies ſhould be made his Footſtool; that they ſhould bow before

him, and lick the Duſt; that he ſhall Rule in the midſt of them; that he ſhall ſtrike through Kings in the day of his wrath; that he ſhall judge among the Heathen; that he ſhall fill the Places with dead Bodies; that he ſhall wound the Heads over many Countries; that he ſhall break the Heathen with a Rod of Iron, and daſh them in pieces like a Potters Veſſel. It were too great force upon Scripture to interpret theſe, and a great many Places more of the Meſſiah's vanquiſhing our Spiritual Enemies only, when the natural ſenſe of them is ſo plain and obvious, touching the ſubduing even of Powers on Earth, the greateſt and ſtrongeſt Powers, that endeavour the deſtruction of Chriſts Kingdom; from the Hand of *ſuch* Enemies he was to ſave us.

3. There is yet a third thing which leads us to the belief of this matter; and it is the conſideration of the nature of that Religion which the Meſſiah was to Plant in the World. A Religion ſo Holy and Spiritual

Spiritual in it ſelf; ſo oppoſite to Mens unreaſonable and outragious Luſts; ſo deſtructive of all worldly and baſe Deſigns; ſo inconſiſtent with the Pride and Ambition of deſigning Men; ſuch an utter Enemy to Fleſh and Blood, that it is impoſſible to conceive but Fleſh and Blood muſt be an Enemy to it: A Religion that layeth before us ſuch ſtrict Laws of Humility, Meekneſs, Self-denial, and Patient ſuffering for Righteouſneſs ſake; In a word, a Religion that leaves us ſo naked and defenceleſs, that without the overruling Providence and powerful Hand of Chriſt, we ſhould be of all Mankind the moſt miſerable, as to our Fortunes here below. 'Twas neceſſary therefore that Chriſt, who was to found his Church upon ſuch diſcouraging Laws, ſhould take care to Preſerve her in the faithful diſcharge of her Duty; becauſe we cannot think, that God ſhould chuſe out to himſelf a peculiar People, only to expoſe them to the Hardſhips and Perſecutions of the World.

World. However for wiſe Reaſons he may for a time aſſign his Church ſuch a Condition as her preſent Lot; 'tis unbecoming the Notion of an infinitely Good, Juſt and Provident Being, to conceive that he has Entailed it on Her as a perpetual Inheritance.

2. This therefore being laid down, that the Meſſiah was to ſave us even from our Temporal Enemies, let us proceed to the Second Conſideration, How this Prediction is fulfilled in the Bleſſed Jeſus, or, how his Providence is ſhewed, in ſaving us from our Enemies.

And here it is to be noted that Chriſt ſaves us from our Enemies, not by a total and actual Deſtruction of them. For his Providence is in order to the Intereſt of his Kingdom; and that intereſt is ſerved by ſuffering evil Men to try and exerciſe the Vertues of his Followers, their Zeal, Patience, Conſtancy, and the like. By this they are the more and more *fitted for the Inheritance of the Saints in light*, and the Glory

Glory of his own Wiſdom, Goodneſs, and Power throughout his whole Oeconomy, is the more diſcover'd. Therefore he will not bring all Enemies under his Feet, by a total deſtruction of them, till the time comes that he muſt deliver up the Kingdom of his Mediatorſhip, when he ſhall put down all Rule, and all Authority and Power. In the mean while he ſhews his Providence, in ſaving us from our Enemies, theſe five ways chiefly.

1. Sometimes by defeating their Deſigns, and by bringing their wicked Counſels to nought. This was one of his firſt cares after his Aſcenſion into Heaven, to guard with his own hand thoſe few Diſciples he had left behind him, and to keep a very watchful Eye over that united force, which reſolved to Extirpate his Religion before it Propagated in the World. Had not Chriſt himſelf blaſted their Devices, by his ſpecial and over-ruling Providence, it had been impoſſible for ſuch a ſmall handful of Men, to have kept their ground, when on all

all hands there were ſuch Formidable, and to Human appearance, ſuch unavoidable Preparations againſt them.

From that Age down to this, the ſtrange and unaccountable Protection of the Truth, in ſpight of all Attempts againſt it, by ways and methods which no human Eye could poſſibly foreſee, and in the moſt threatning and dangerous Junctures, is an amazing Argument, that the Son of God ſits not in Heaven a meer Spectator of this Sublunary World; but that with an Inviſible and Almighty hand, he doth Govern all Occurrences; and how furious ſoever the drivings of Men may be, he ſtill holds the Rein, and not only checks them in their full Career, but ſpoils and ruins all their Deſigns in the very heat of their Expectations.

2. Sometimes he doth not only ſtop our Enemies Proceedings, but moreover turns their Deſigns to diſtant and quite contrary Purpoſes, by making that ſubſervient to the *Advantage*, which was intended for the

Deſtruction

Deſtruction of the Truth. This is a Glorious and aſtoniſhing Inſtance of his Power and Wiſdom both, that he draws Good out of Evil; that in the moſt uncomfortable and afflicting Circumſtances, he makes every thing to work together for good, and directs the moſt wicked Contrivances to the nobleſt Ends. Thus his Providence hath been for the moſt part imployed, to wrap up in Mens Deſigns glorious Ends of his own, which nothing but the Event could diſcover. When the Myſtery of his Providence hath come to be opened, his wonderful Conduct hath been made manifeſt, and that ſecret and over-ruling Hand hath been evidently ſeen, which makes even his Enemies ſuch Inſtruments to carry on his Purpoſes, and to bring his Ends to paſs, as if they themſelves had deſigned and ſtudied to ſerve them: Who could have thought, that the malice of the hardned Jews ſhould help to eſtabliſh Chriſtianity? Who could have thought, that thoſe long and continual Perſecutions

from the Heathens, which were intended in the Primitive times to deſtroy the Faith, ſhould ſerve as means to confirm it, to make it ſpread, and thrive, and flouriſh in the World? Yet this the Ancient Chriſtians boaſted of, that the more they were harraſſed and cut off, the more they encreaſed ſtill, like Graſs that is mown, (to uſe *Tertullians* Similitude) the more the Church ſuffer'd, like a Vine fed with Blood, the more it proſper'd; the Thicker, the Fairer, the better were the Cluſters. And though in the Peaceable times which followed next under Chriſtian Emperors, many peſtilent Hereſies, as that of *Arius*, and others, ſtarted up, which were more miſchievous to Chriſtianity than the former Perſecutions had been, yet the Orthodox Faith was never ſince the Apoſtles days ſo ſtrictly Examin'd, ſo convincingly Defended, ſo abundantly Confirm'd, as it was in thoſe Times. They were indeed the Learned times of Chriſtianity; and that which made them ſo was, the continual Oppoſi-

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tion of ſubtle and learned Hereticks, who intended to undermine the very Foundations of the Catholick Faith; but by the over-ruling Providence of Chriſt, were the means of ſetling it the firmer upon its true Bottom. And in later times, eſpecially in theſe laſt Ages, this hath been the lucky effect of Controverſies; that whereas through the Ignorance, or the ſiniſter Deſigns of ſome Men, Religion had been cover'd over with much Falſhood and Superſtition, like a Jewel blended in an heap of Duſt, by continual ſtirring and ſifting of the Rubbiſh, the Truth has been fortunately reſtored to its native Luſtre and Brightneſs. The iſſue of thoſe Conflicts hath ſtill been Good, wherein our Lord was pleaſed, for wiſe Reaſons, to ſuffer us to be engaged, not only for the diſcriminating of Good Men from Bad, but alſo for the clearing of True Doctrines from Falſe; and notwithſtanding all the Arts of our moſt power-

ful Enemies; by the Bleſſing of Chriſt we have been more than Conquerors, through him that hath ſtrengthned us, and hath turned the worſt Purpoſes to the beſt Events.

3. Chriſt ſhews his Providence in ſaving us from our Enemies, ſometimes by making them ſignal and publick Monuments of his Juſtice. And this is uſually in Caſes, when either the wickedneſs of Chriſt's Enemies is Prodigiouſly and Scandalouſly Great, or when the Salvation of his Followers is not ſo eaſily to be wrought in an ordinary way. Then Deſtruction is neceſſary, partly to render the Puniſhment of thoſe that hate us Exemplary and Notorious as their Sins were; and partly to give the more abundant ſafety and confidence to ſuch as love the Lord Jeſus in Sincerity. Thus he dealt with the Bloody and Obſtinate Nation of the Jews, who not ſatisfied with this, that

that with barbarous Hands they had ſlain the Prince of Life himſelf, reſolved to make havock of all his Followers too. To reſcue theſe, and to make the great Maſs of their Enemies the moſt aſtoniſhing Inſtances of Divine Vengeance; after Forty years Patience and Long-ſuffering he brought that Solemn and Pompous deſtruction upon them; when their Temple and the City of *Jeruſalem* was Conſumed; their Government in Church and State was utterly Diſſolved, and the Generality of them that had eſcaped the fury of the *Romans*, were made Out-caſts and Vagabonds over the Face of the whole Earth, without hopes of ever being Re-eſtabliſhed in that Land, which they and their Fathers had polluted, and ſo abandon'd to a Curſed and Reprobate ſtate, that (as ſome of the Ancients tell us) as often as a Remnant of them endeavour'd to repair their City, they were immediately conſumed by Fire from Heaven.

ven. The like exemplary Vengeance Chriſt executed upon the *Romans* themſelves in proceſs of time, when the Ripeneſs of their Sins, and the Safety of the Church required again a Sign from Heaven. The Metropolis of theſe *Romans* was ſackt too; and that by barbarous Nations, who were Inſtruments in the hand of Chriſt, as they themſelves had formerly been, to avenge that Innocent Blood which had been ſhed upon the Earth; and as they had aſſiſted and communicated with the *Jews* in their Villanies, ſo they ſhared with them in their Puniſhment alſo. I will not ſpeak of the exemplary deſtruction of particular Perſons in the Primitive times who fought againſt the Truth, as well Perſecutors as Hereticks: 'twere endleſs to make a juſt Collection of ſuch Obſervations; and later Ages have given us Inſtances of this kind abundant which our Fathers and our ſelves have ſeen; nor do I doubt, but we or our Poſterity ſhall in Gods time ſee ſome more.

4. Fourthly,

4. Fourthly, The good Providence of Christ over his Church is never more discover'd, than in saving her from her Enemies at nice and critical Seasons. Every day is not a fit time for him to shew the Greatness of his Power: there is a day in the course of Affairs, which he in his Infinite Wisdom foresees will be the most Proper, Necessary, and Convenient Day of Salvation; and in that appointed time he is wont to make bare and stretch out his Arm, to gain himself the Victory. *Thou shalt arise and have mercy upon Sion*, (saith the Psalmist) *for it is time to have mercy upon her, yea the set time is come*, Psam 102. 13.

And though we cannot search into the Counsels of Heaven, nor foretell exactly at all times when that set and appointed Juncture will be, yet St. *Chrysostom* somewhere excellently observes, that it is usual with God to shew his own Extraordinary Power

Power, when there is Extremity of Danger, when Evils are grown to a very critical Pitch, and when ordinary means of escaping seem to be out of our reach and power. And, as I remember, he instanceth in that very dangerous case the Church was in, under that crafty and resolute Emperour, who had revolted from the Christian Faith; though he dissembled it for a time, till he had power enough in his hands to endeavour the extirpation of it. The truth is, what by his restoring the Heathen Idolatries, what by his encouraging all sorts of Factions, what by his letting loose upon the Orthodox Christians, especially upon the Bishops of the Church, all the Enemies they had on each hand: and what by many other sly, but hateful Methods which he used, the Faith of Christ was like to have failed in the *Roman* Empire in a short time, without the Miraculous protection of Christ himself. In that critical Season he shew'd his Almighty Power beyond

yond expectations; for in the Engagement with the *Perſians*, that Emperour was providentially ſlain; all grant, by an unknown hand; ſome thought, by the hand of an Angel; but the Emperour himſelf ſeemed to confeſs, it was by the immediate hand of Chriſt: for finding himſelf mortally wounded, he threw up (as we are told) ſome of his Blood into the Air, with this expreſſion, which he utter'd in a rage, *Viciſti Galilæe*, thou haſt been to hard for me, O thou *Galilæan*. This was Chriſt's ſet and convenient time of ſhewing Mercy upon *Sion* then; and the like Mercy he hath ſhew'd in innumerable Inſtances more; when the Enemies of Truth have been impatient, till they brought Affairs to a Criſis, to Extremity of Danger: by driving furiouſly they have only haſtned to be undone. By precipitating their Deſigns with a quick hand; by making Evils to grow to a high degree, and ſwell to a full head, they have in a great meaſure

neceſſitated the Saviour of his Church Miraculouſly to interpoſe.

5. Laſtly, Chriſt ſhews the greatneſs of his Salvation, by delivering us from our Enemies after a ſurprizing and ſudden manner, and by making quick work. Thus he hath promiſed to deal with that Myſtical Babylon, *Revel.* 18. Though the Kings of the Earth have committed Fornication with her, and the Merchants of the Earth wax Rich through the abundance of her Deliciaſies, yet her Plagues ſhall come in one day, *Verſe* 8. In one Hour ſhall her Judgment come, *Verſe* 10. In one Hour ſhall her great Riches come to nought, *Verſe* 16. In one Hour ſhall ſhe be made Deſolate, *Verſe* 19. Nor is this unuſual with the Divine Juſtice, to viſit wicked Men with ſudden and ſpeedy Deſtruction. It was the Obſervation of *Job*; The Houſes of the wicked are ſafe from fear, neither is the

the rod of God upon them; they take the Timbrel and the Harp, and rejoice at the ſound of the Organ; they ſpend their days in wealth: But then it follows, in a Moment they go down into the Grave, *Job* 21. 13. It was the Obſervation of the *Pſalmiſt*; O how ſuddenly do they conſume, periſh, and come to a fearful end? It was the Obſervation of St. *Paul*; They ſay peace and ſafety, and then ſudden Deſtruction cometh upon them. 'Tis a thing commonly obſervable, that a day bringeth forth ſtrange Alterations; that Men are oftentimes ſurprized in the depth of their Security; that Vengeance comes, as the Sentence upon *Belſhazzar*'s Wall did, unexpectedly in a Night; or as our laſt Change ſhall come, in a Moment, in the twinkling of an Eye. And this is a demonſtrative Argument of the watchful Providence of Chriſt, that after a long Series and Train of Contrivances againſt his Church, when Mens

Hopes are the ſtrongeſt; when their Expectations are moſt confident; when their Deſigns are at their full ripeneſs; when the Succeſs of them ſeems altogether unqueſtionable: Then, by ſome unforeſeen Accident or other, the Snare is all in a trice broken, and that, after a ſecret and unaccountable manner; ſo that in that very Self-ſame Net which wicked Men had laid for others, their own Feet are providentially taken.

3. From this whole Conſideration, (that I may now in the Third Place render it Practical) there are Two things which naturally follow.

1. That, as in all Caſes, we are with the moſt Humble and Devout Hearts, to implore Chriſts Protection, and lift up our Eyes to him from whom all our help cometh; ſo we muſt, in all difficult Caſes eſpecially, depend ſtill upon his Providence with all modeſt Aſſurance, poſſeſſing

poſſeſſing our Souls in Patience, and caſting all our Cares on him who careth for us, and committing our ſelves to him in Well-doing. Every hour he is preparing new Mercies for us, if we do but ſo order our ways, by the aſſiſtance of his Grace, as to make our ſelves Receptive of them. He hath worked hitherto, and doth ſtill work; nor will his Providence give over working, till the Final and Eternal Salvation of his Church be accompliſhed.

Whatever it be therefore that we deſire and hope for at any time; whether it be the Deliverance of our ſelves in any dangerous Caſes; or whether it be the Preſervation of the Church when it may ſeem to ſhake; or whether it be the Enlarging of the Borders of Chriſt's Sanctuary; we may ſafely and with full Truſt rely on him, who hath aſſured us, that he himſelf will be with us, even to the end of the World.

Many

Many Predictions relating to our Saviour, were plainly fulfilled upon his coming into the World; and more have been fulfilled ſince his Aſcenſion into Heaven. But as a Learned Divine of our own hath of late particularly obſerved, there are divers more which are yet unfulfilled: Some which ſpeak of Chriſts Confounding, Scattering, and Subduing thoſe his Enemies, the Eaſtern Infidels; that his Kingdom may be enlarged over that great part of the World; and ſome too which ſpeak of the univerſal Reformation of Chriſtendom it ſelf; and the reſtoring of all Churches in this Weſtern World, to that admirable Purity of Faith and Worſhip, which the Ancient Churches of Chriſt were ſo Renowned for. According to the Tenor of theſe Predictions, or at leaſt according to the probable Conſtruction that is given of them, before this Univerſal Reformation, which I now ſpeak of: That Faction which in ſome Places of Scripture is called by

Dr. Scot Chriſtian Life, Par. 2. Vol. 2. pag. 490.

by the name of Babylon and Antichriſt, will employ its Power by Wars and Perſecutions, to extirpate out of theſe Parts the preſent Pure Profeſſion of Chriſtianity; and of this God knows we have already ſeen, and daily ſee too much. But the account which followeth, is, "That many Kings and Princes, "even thoſe who have hitherto been par-"takers with that Faction in its foul Im-"poſtures and Corruptions, ſhall all on a "ſudden turn their Swords againſt it, and "Conſpire to root it out utterly from off "the Face of the Earth. This indeed gives us a Comfortable Proſpect of the Glorious ſtate of Chriſts Kingdom that ſhall be; and though the Completion of this Part of the Propheſie be ſtill to be expected; yet I will preſume to ſay, that were we of this Age but capable of ſo great a Bleſſing, methinks it would not be againſt Reaſon to hope, I am ſure 'tis not beyond the Rules of Piety to wiſh, that that happy day may even now

be

be approaching,; and that the preſent Juncture of Affairs may be the Dawning of that Day; there is at this Critical time a Providential concurrence of ſuch Circumſtances, as methinks ſeem at leaſt to Promiſe a fulfilling of this Prediction in a ſhort ſpace, and that the day of our Common Salvation is not very far off. Let me here again uſe thoſe devout Expreſſions of the Holy Pſalmiſt; *Ariſe, O Lord, and have mercy upon Sion; for it is time that thou have mercy upon her; yea the ſet time ſeemeth to be coming.* But for this, and all other Bleſſings, we muſt depend on the good Providence of him, whom the Father hath made the Prince and Captain of our Salvation, to exerciſe and ſhew his Soveraign Power, when the ſet, the appointed Time ſhall actually come.

2. To make way for it, as much as lyeth in us, it is neceſſary for us, in the Second Place, to expreſs all poſſible Thankſ-

Thankfulneſs to the great Biſhop of our Souls, for the Bleſſings we already enjoy; and particularly for the Bleſſing in my Text, Salvation from our Enemies, and from the hands of thoſe (would to God I could ſay from the hands of all) that hate us. What Demonſtrations of his Almighty Power and Over-ruling Providence, hath Chriſt given at any time, in any Nation, which he hath not given unto this? Whether it be the defeating and fruſtrating wicked Mens Deſigns; he hath done it here: Whether it be the Turning and Directing of their ill Deſigns to the beſt Purpoſes; He hath done it here: Whether it be the making deſigning Men Publick and Exemplary Monuments of his Juſtice; he hath done it here: Whe- it be the ſtretching out of his Arm on a ſudden, and at nice and critical Seaſons; he hath done it here; by delivering us in one Age from Tyranny, when the Armado that ſhould have landed it, was juſt ready upon our

Coaſts; by delivering us in the next Age from Ruine, when the Fire was juſt ready for the Sulphur; and by delivering us in this Age from Servitude, when the Yoke was juſt ready for our Necks; and all this with a quick hand, after a ſtrange and myſterious manner; and let me add, without Bloodſhed for the moſt part; nay, which is more, without any Stream of Blood of our very Enemies. Never was the Truth more Own'd, more Atteſted, more Miraculouſly Defended and Preſerved, in any Countreys ſince the Primitive Ages, then it hath been in this: And God forbid that we, who of all Nations are moſt indebted to the ſpecial Providence of Chriſt, ſhould at laſt prove the moſt Unthankful People in the World. How divided ſoever we be in other Matters, God forbid but we ſhould unanimouſly joyn in this; I mean in a deep ſence of the wonderful Mercies of God, and of the unſpeakable Miſeries which the Horn of our

our Salvation hath delivered us from. As it is in Point of Nature; though the Conſtitutions of particular Perſons be different, yet all of us agree in one common Humanity; and as it is in point of Religion, though the Opinions of particular Perſons be different, as to unneceſſary Matters, yet all of us agree in one common Faith, ſo it ought to be in this Point of Gratitude; though the Sentiments of particular Perſons may be different as to ſome things, yet God forbid but we ſhould agree in one common Acknowledgment, of the wonderful Providence of Chriſt in ſaving us from our Enemies hitherto. Let us be Thankful for the Bleſſings we have; this is the way for us to obtain more. I am ſure Ingratitude never was the way to obtain any. I Pray God open our Eyes, that we may ſee the things which are for our Peace, before they be hid from us. And Chriſt of his Mercy grant us a continuance of his Protection; that

as

as he hath delivered us, and doth deliver us, so he may be pleased to Deliver us still. To him, with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, be all Honour and Praise, World without End. *Amen.*

FINIS.